

IT IS CLAIMED:

1. An oral-delivery composition for use in treating HCV in a HCV-infected patient comprising ovine IFN- $\tau$ , in a dosage effective to stimulate bloodstream levels of 2', 5'-oligoadenylate synthetase.

2. The oral-delivery composition of claim 1, which further comprises an oral-delivery vehicle containing IFN- $\tau$ , wherein said oral-delivery vehicle is effective to release the IFN- $\tau$  in active form in the digestive tract.

3. The composition of claim 2, wherein the vehicle is effective to release ovine IFN- $\tau$  in the stomach or intestines.

4. The composition of claim 1 wherein the dosage of ovine IFN- $\tau$  is between  $10^8 - 10^{10}$  Units/day.

5. The composition of claim 1, wherein the dosage of ovine IFN- $\tau$  is greater than about  $1 \times 10^8$  Units/day.

6. The composition of claim 1, wherein the dosage of ovine IFN- $\tau$  is greater than about  $2 \times 10^8$  Units/day.

7. The composition of claim 1, wherein the dosage of ovine IFN- $\tau$  is greater than about  $4 \times 10^8$  Units/day.

8. The composition of claim 1, wherein the dosage of ovine IFN- $\tau$  is greater than about  $1 \times 10^9$  Units/day.

9. The composition of claim 1, wherein the dosage of ovine IFN- $\tau$  is greater than about  $4 \times 10^9$  Units/day.

10. The composition of claim 1, wherein the dosage of ovine IFN- $\tau$  is greater than about  $7 \times 10^9$  Units/day.

11. The composition of claim 1, wherein the dosage of ovine IFN- $\tau$  avoids the *tunica mucosa oris*.

12. The composition of claim 1, in combination with ribavirin.

13. A pharmaceutical composition for the treatment of HCV comprising:  
ovine IFN- $\tau$  as an effective ingredient, wherein said composition avoids the absorption of  
ovine IFN- $\tau$  through the *tunica mucosa oris*.

14. A pharmaceutical composition for the treatment of hepatitis caused by HCV  
comprising ovine IFN- $\tau$  as an effective ingredient.

15. A 2', 5'-oligoadenylate synthetase activity inducer in animals other than sheep  
comprising ovine IFN- $\tau$ .

16. A method of monitoring treatment of HCV by oral administration of ovine IFN- $\tau$   
comprising:

measuring the blood levels of 2', 5'-oligoadenylate synthetase prior to and after such oral  
administration, and if necessary

adjusting the dose of IFN- $\tau$  until a measurable increase in blood 2', 5'-oligoadenylate  
synthetase level, relative to the level observed prior to administration, is observed.

17. The method of claim 16, wherein said adjusting includes increasing the dose above  
 $10^8$  units.